

he disowned my mother
for marrying a non-catholic

rain pounding
on an old torn roof
makes me write this down

it was here at Mary Smokes
I first heard rain as symphony
as opera
as atomic jazz
as music so evernew & emotional
I could never come to the end
of its beautiful intensity
never hear it too often
never tire of its simple
yet intricate power

the sound of rain on rusty roof
of this dump will haunt me
for the rest of my life

TORCH POEM

the center of a flashlight
beam is the darkest part
then a ring of the brightest part
& a less bright ring
next to a dim one

I saw this as I walked
up a grass lane between
rows of fruit trees
custard apples & lychees
Pleiades to my right
Southern Cross to my left
blazing bull's eye cone
of my small black torch
showing me the way

DADA

whenever my dad
went into a bar
after a few drinks
strangers flocked around him
because he told stories
straight whiskey no chaser stories
straight from his drunken heart

so ahead of their time
no one knew they were art
not even him

I do now
40 years later
& so does my typewriter

COCKROACH ART

left volume 27
of my journal out
overnight unprotected
in cockroach haven kitchen

thus it was vulnerable
i.e. patches of dye
devoured from sky
colored cover — like
fleecy off-blue clouds

#29

I found a honeyeater
in the bushes
mauled by a cat
a scarlet honeyeater
with a hurt wing
hanging loose
& fanned out

my girlfriend's son
nursed her back to health
fed her honey on the tip
of his finger that she
lapped up hungrily with
long brush-tipped tongue
bright eyes glowing
like tiny black pearls

I felt her life-force
tingle my nerves as
I held her softly
in my hands like
a wounded heroine

a week later she flew away
with a flash of orange
under her brown wings